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Free silver and its effect
on the farmer...

Chicago

1896

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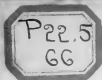
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Free Silver

AND ITS EFFECT ON

The Farmer and Wage-Earner



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AN IMPORTANT DIALOGUE BETWEEN A FARMER AND A WAGE-EARNER.

THE MEANING OF 16 TO 1.

Wage-Earner.—"John, I wish you would explain to me what is meant by 'a ratio of silver to gold 16 to 1.'"

Farmer.—"It means that under Free Coinage sixteen ounces of silver will be worth one ounce of gold. In consequence of there being much more silver than could be used by reason of larger production, it has fallen very greatly in value, so that one ounce of gold bullion will to-day buy thirty-two ounces of silver. This great difference between the mint ratio of sixteen to one and the market value of thirty-two to one, is the source of the trouble with the silver men to-day."

Wage-Earner.—"Can you tell me the exact meaning of the term 'free coinage?'"

THE MEANING OF FREE COINAGE.

Farmer.—"Free coinage means that any person who pleases can take silver bullion, worth 52 cents intrinsically, to the mint and have it coined into a full legal tender 100 cent dollar, containing not an ounce, but four hundred and twelve and a half grains of standard silver, or three hundred and seventy-one and a quarter grains of pure silver. (I am speaking by the book, for I could not carry these figures in my head.) This coinage is free. Please note that it is the *coinage that is free, and not the silver or the dollar.* These are no freer than they have ever been. I call your attention to this because there is much confusion on the subject. Many people believe that in some way or another free coinage at 16 to 1 means a large increase to them of *free money.* It means nothing of the kind; as a matter of fact the '16 to 1' ratio proposed by the silver party in connection with free coinage is the one employed by the mint to-day. But the people have worked themselves up into the belief that this free coinage business is going to be a regular bonanza for them, and they are now quite satisfied about it just as the negroes in the South believed some years ago that the Government was obligated to supply each of them with forty acres and a mule. Why, I know one man who is actually hoarding bank bills because he believes that the Government will pay for *each paper dollar, sixteen silver dollars.* Did you ever hear of such idiocy?"

Wage-Earner.—"Did you say just now that the *present* ratio is 16 to 1?"

Farmer.—"Yes. The Government can coin at that rate with safety so long as it can restrict the amount coined. This it can do now, so it can safely undertake to make every dollar good money, but of course under free coinage every condition would be changed and every existing safeguard swept away."

IMMENSE INCREASE IN SILVER SUPPLY IN RECENT YEARS THE CAUSE OF THE FALLING PRICE; THE STOPPAGE OF FREE COINAGE IN 1873 HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT.

Wage-Earner.—"One writer states in his book that silver kept about the same *market* ratio to gold—that is about 16 to 1—until our Government stopped the free coinage of silver in 1873. Silver then became cheaper, he says, until in 1892 the *market* ratio was 24 to 1, is that right?"

Farmer.—"Well, I think it is about on a level with all the other arguments of the silver people. They state a fact in such a way and connection that it becomes a falsehood in their hands and entirely misleading. Now, just listen to me a minute," he continued, fingering in the lining of his hat for a scrap of paper. "I have some figures here of the world's supply of silver from 1781 to 1894, the latest which could be got. They show that the silver production of the entire world from 1781 to 1870 was less than twenty-seven million fine ounces a year. Since 1871 it has averaged over seventy-seven million ounces a year, and from 1891 to 1894 it averaged one hundred and fifty-five millions of ounces per annum; while for 1894 itself, the last year of which I have any record, it was one hundred and sixty-six millions of fine ounces! Just look at these figures and see how the supply has increased:

1781 TO 1870, SILVER SUPPLY, FINE OUNCES,	26,950,494	} ANNUAL AVERAGE FOR PERIOD.
1873 TO 1890, " " " "	77,865,371	
1891 TO 1894, " " " "	155,522,638	
FOR 1894, " " " "	166,601,995	

"The Coinage value of this silver was, for 1781 to 1800, annual average \$36,000,000 and for 1894 \$215,000,000.

"Now, they may say what they like about the 'crime of 1873,' but if our legislators foresaw this immense over-supply of silver they did a very wise thing in stopping free coinage when they did; and if they did not foresee it they builded better than they knew, that is all.

COUNTRIES WITH A POPULATION OF 400 MILLIONS THREW SILVER OUT, TOO, AFTER 1873. WOULDN'T HAVE IT AT ANY PRICE.

"But, Sam, that isn't all. In face of that enormous increase, Germany demonetized silver and threw her large supply on the

market in 1873; Italy closed her mints against free coinage of silver in 1875; Austria-Hungary did the same thing in 1879, and in 1893 India, which was then coining silver at the rate of \$25,000,000 per annum, followed suit. Now, Sam, you will see on the one hand a supply of silver springing by leaps and bounds from \$36,000,000 to \$215,000,000 a year, and on the other hand silver countries outside our own, with a population of four hundred million people, nearly six times our own population, stopping the use of it. Now, I ask you as a reasonable man, could you imagine two more powerful causes for the decline in silver which has taken place since 1873 than this over-supply of silver and the subsequent shutting up of its principal markets? And yet these silver men have the audacity to blame the Government and accuse it of a 'crime in 1873!' Anyone would think that this country had been the principal market for silver up to 1873, whereas *all the dollars we had coined up to that time amounted to only \$8,000,000.* Not per annum, mind you, but *altogether.*

AS FALSE AS THE THEORY THAT THE FALL IN SILVER DRAGGED WHEAT DOWN WITH IT.

"Such an argument is an insult to one's understanding and quite on a par with the other ridiculous statement that, in falling, the price of silver pulled down the price of wheat with it. THE FALL OF SILVER, believe me, Sam, HAD NO MORE TO DO WITH THE DECLINE IN WHEAT THAN THE FALL OF THE THERMOMETER HAD. But they happened at the same time and both from an over-supply, in the one case of wheat and in the other case of silver. These men saw their great opportunity in the happening of both these things at the same time. They aimed to confuse the farmer and so enlist his vote on behalf of their patrons, the mine-owners, so that the farming interest, inflamed by such false talk about the crime of 1873, and the still more false claim that the so-called *crime* had driven down the price of wheat by sending down silver, would vote for the free coinage of silver whereby the mine-owner would receive a dollar worth 100 cents for every 52 cents' worth of silver in his possession. But men like these are always *over* clever, and they end only in fooling themselves. I tell you Lincoln was right, 'You can't fool *all* the people *all* the time.'"

Wage-Earner.—"Well, John, it seems to me that no one wants any better reasons for the fall of silver than those you have stated."

NO OTHER COUNTRY WOULD FOLLOW OUR LEAD IF WE ADOPTED FREE COINAGE.

Wage-Earner.—"Do you suppose any other country would adopt free coinage if we did?"

Farmer.—"Most certainly not. They are all fully satisfied of its risks and don't want it, whoever is foolish enough to take it up. Not only would they *not* follow our lead but they would dump their disused stocks on us."

GOLD HAS NOT APPRECIATED.

Wage Earner.—"The silver men say that the low price of the silver metal is due to the appreciation or rise in the value of gold; that in reality, it is not silver which has fallen but gold which has risen."

Farmer.—"That is ridiculous: Gold has NOT appreciated. Silver, like other commodities, has fallen because a great deal more has been produced than could be consumed, and because it can be produced more cheaply now. Although there is sufficient gold for the world's use in minting, and for the arts and industries, there has been no surplus to break down its value, hence, it can to-day buy a larger quantity of silver bullion than formerly. Judged by the supreme test of the relative value of human labor it has not appreciated, but the contrary."

THE "CRIME OF 1873" WAS NEVER COMMITTED.

Wage-Earner.—"What *was* the crime of 1873, about which the silver men make so much fuss?"

Farmer.—"I asked the same question myself and this is the reply I got: There never was the slightest approach to a 'crime.' Certain legislation was enacted for the codification of the existing laws relating to the mint, which had not been revised for more than a generation, thereby causing much confusion. By the Act of 1873 the old standard silver dollar, which had long gone out of circulation on account of its bullion value being greater than its coined value, was omitted. A silver Trade dollar of 420 grains Troy was added to the circulation for the benefit of the silver producers and at their request to enable them to find a market in the East for their silver. Every man from the Pacific Coast voted for this 1873 legislation. It had been the intention of the Act of 1853 to omit the Standard silver dollar, just as it was its intention to make the gold dollar the unit of value (it had been the metallic unit since 1834), and these avowed intentions of the Act of 1853 were carried into effect in the new legislation of 1873, which was simply a large re-enactment of existing laws. The silver men held different views then from what they do now. Senator Stewart, of Nevada, said: 'I want the standard gold, and no paper money not redeemable in gold,' and on February 20th, 1874, he said: 'BY THIS PROCESS WE SHALL COME TO A SPECIE BASIS, AND WHEN THE LABORING MAN RECEIVES A DOLLAR IT SHALL HAVE THE PURCHASING POWER OF A

DOLLAR. *Gold is the universal standard of the world. Everybody knows what a dollar in gold is worth.*"

Wage-Earner.—"But, say, John, surely there was more to the crime than that, or these men would not raise such an outcry about it now?"

Farmer (smiling sardonically).—"THIS TALK OF THE 'CRIME OF 1873' IS PURE BLUFF ON THE PART OF THE SILVER MEN. The Act of 1873 was under open consideration for three years. It was passed in the usual slow methodical way, and I won't do our very sharp friends the silver men the injustice to suppose for a single moment that any silver legislation affecting *them* escaped their notice when it was under way. The fact is there was nothing to be made by free coinage then; and it is *only now when they see they can make nearly a hundred per cent. profit* on their silver by free coinage that they are crying out about having been cheated in 1873. Silver production has increased from 25,000,000 to 166,000,000 fine ounces a year; other great countries have discontinued its use, and the result is the price has broken down altogether, and now these silver men want free coinage reinstated so that they can take their 52 cents' worth of silver to the mint and get it coined into a dollar, which they will compel you and me to take. In my judgment THE 'CRIME OF 1873' IS ONLY USED TO HIDE THE SILVER MEN'S GREAT BUNCO GAME OF 1896."

Wage-Earner.—"Was there not some act passed in 1890 to help the silver men?"

Farmer.—"Yes, the *Sherman Act* of 1890. That, and the Act of 1878, was the cause of the Government buying silver largely and adding hundreds of millions of dollars to our silver circulation. The silver men had a pretty good 'innings' then, I can tell you. The Government actually paid them \$464,000,000 for silver under the *Blind and Sherman Laws*."

Wage-Earner.—"And did not that help the silver men?"

Farmer.—"Of course, they sold quite a quantity of silver, but not even the United States could keep up the price of the metal in face of such a surplus, and the price went down steadily, in spite of these purchases. Then the Government had to stop the purchase because it was found THAT THE COUNTRY COULD NOT CARRY ANY MORE SILVER WITHOUT BREAKING DOWN THE PARITY OF THE TWO METALS, GOLD AND SILVER."

THE MEANING OF PARITY.

Wage-Earner.—"What does the word *parity* mean?"

Farmer.—"It means equality. To maintain the parity of gold and silver means that the two coins shall have equal value in

the market. If the silver dollar were selling at 80 cents, while the gold dollar sold at 100 cents, the parity would not be maintained."

Wage-Earner.—"John, I am still a little mixed. You say the Government *bought* silver under the *Sherman Act*; now, what is the difference between buying silver and free coinage?"

Farmer.—"When the Government buys silver it does so at the market price ruling at the time, and if there is any profit between the cost of the silver and the value of the coined dollar, it is called *seignorage*, and belongs to the Government; or, in other words, the people of the United States. Under free coinage the owner of silver will take his fifty-two cents' worth of metal to the mint, and get it stamped as worth a dollar. The profit goes into *his pocket*."

Wage-Earner.—"John, whose stamp gives that fifty-two cents' worth of silver the value of a dollar?"

Farmer.—"The Government's."

Wage-Earner.—"Now, John, do you think that, with 'the image and superscription' of the United States upon a dollar coin it is 'rendering unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's,' as we are commanded in the Bible, to give that profit to another? The 'Cæsar' in our day and generation being the sovereign people of the United States, are THEY not entitled to the value which their stamp gives to that dollar, and, more especially, as THEY WILL HAVE TO BEAR THE BURNING DISGRACE OF IT?"

Farmer.—"Sam, you are right, the whole situation is unspeakable. The greed of these silver men has over-filled our currency with silver already; and their continuous agitation has destroyed confidence and almost ruined the country's trade."

Wage-Earner.—"By the way, what about the silver men's claim that the fall of silver since 1873 has dragged the price of wheat down with it, and that the price of the one governs that of the other?"

WHY WHEAT HAS FALLEN.

Farmer.—"The fall has been brought about by the opening up to wheat cultivation of vast areas of land in other countries. This has been done at a rate hitherto unknown in the history of the world, and it has all happened since 1873. A large growth has taken place at the same time in railway and shipping development all over the globe, so that the wheat crops of India, Russia and the Argentine Republic compete with our own in the markets of Europe, thereby causing a large surplus here and consequent shrinkage in price. In 1892 India and Argentina shipped to our markets 215

million bushels more than they shipped in 1873. In addition to foreign competition we have enormously developed our own area under cultivation and cheapened our methods of raising wheat. For instance, in 1875 there were 26,381,512 acres of wheat cultivated in this country; in 1891 there were 39,916,897, an increase of forty per cent., while the yield in the latter year was 611,000,000 bushels, as compared with 192,000,000 in 1875. In the face of these figures it is easy to understand that

**THE FALL OF WHEAT IS DUE
TO EXCESSIVE COMPETITION.**

"Wheat has in fact fallen in strict obedience to an unflinching natural law, that is to say, its value has fallen in the face of a surplus of cheaper grain. If a blight were to kill the crops in Argentina, Russia and India, and our land under wheat cultivation should be reduced to the area of 1873,

**THE PRICE OF WHEAT WOULD RISE
REGARDLESS OF THE PRICE OF SILVER,**

until it rose above the coveted dollar per bushel figure. The rise in the price of wheat would not affect the price of silver, which has its own particular set of influences, with the result that silver would stand at fifty cents per ounce, while wheat stood at one dollar per bushel. There is no gainsaying that argument, which disposes absolutely of the theory that the price of wheat governs the price of silver."

Wage-Earner.—"What sort of company will Uncle Sam find himself in if he adopts Free Coinage?"

FINE COMPANY, THESE REVOLUTIONARY, IRRESPONSIBLE COUNTRIES, FOR DEAR OLD UNCLE SAM, WHO HAS ALWAYS BEEN SO RESPECTABLE!

Farmer.—"The 'crowd' he will thenceforward belong to, and which he will not be able to quit in your lifetime or mine, if he joins it, will consist of Mexico, Central America, Peru, Bolivia, Japan, China and the Straits Settlements. I ought to state, though, in justice to Japan, that she is very anxious to get into better society, and is arranging with great haste for admission to the more select gold crowd. Judge George N. Aldredge describes the situation brilliantly in the following paragraph:

To-day the United States, the foremost nation in all the earth in solvency and resources, in intelligence and energy, is seriously invited to abandon the standard of civilization and commerce and to consort with half-civilized, half-clad people, who are weak and ignorant; who have little or no commerce; where bull-fights abound and schools do not; where human labor is in sharp competition with the meek and lowly jackass; where a breech-clout is preferred to a full suit, and where the bulk of the people know no more about a standard of value than a male does about the nebular hypothesis. Surely we would do well to take a look at the company before we sit down to the feast.

**TAKE AWAY OUR RATING;
HAUL DOWN "OLD GLORY."**

"The company of gold-standard nations opposed to free coinage is made up of the United States, England, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. Russia is preparing to resume specie payments on a gold basis. If a man is known by the company he keeps, I think the same may be said of a nation. This country is a law unto itself, but there are one or two things it cannot afford to do—*may it dare* not do. It *dare* not defraud its creditors, because it is an honorable nation, and it *dare not* join that silver group of nations, because that means free coinage, which means dishonor."

Wage-Earner.—"John, you take my breath away, but I can see this is a much more serious business than I had any notion of. There is one thing, however, that is not at all clear to me yet. Even if the silver mine owner gets a hundred cent dollar for his 52 cents of silver, I should not think that he could do it to any very serious extent."

**SILVER OWNERS EXPECT TO MAKE \$25,000,000 A
YEAR TO BEGIN WITH BY FREE COINAGE, AND
PERHAPS \$100,000,000 A YEAR, WHEN THE MINTS
ARE INCREASED. SILVER COINAGE IS TO BE FREE,
INDEPENDENT AND UNLIMITED.**

Farmer.—"The silver men expect to make huge fortunes by free coinage. They may make quite a little sum at the outset, but even that is doubtful. Free coinage will not be for them only, but for all the world, and silver will flow here like a river. They will only share to a limited extent while the delusion lasts, and it will be short-lived, although the disgrace and the ruin of free coinage under existing conditions will remain. I say it will not last, because I believe that the worst panic this country has ever seen will take place on its introduction. Men who know declare that as soon as this country adopts free coinage all our gold will leave us. As this amounts to \$600,000,000, and our mints can only coin at the rate of about \$40,000,000 or \$50,000,000 per annum, you will see for yourself that it will be many years before our metal currency which has left us can be replaced. With the departure of the gold, and our entire currency based on a fluctuating speculative metal like silver, every shred of business confidence, which is the life and soul of our commerce, would go and business would come to a standstill. If free coinage should outlive the condition of affairs which would instantly follow, I should be vastly surprised, so you see that

after all the silver people will in reality have little to gain by the ruin they are working, although they expect so much. I can think of nothing as foolish as their action unless it be Lamb's famous story of the Chinaman who burned his house down in order to roast the pig he had first locked inside. I may be wrong, but I believe that the election of a Free Silver President would plunge the country into a panic without waiting for any free coinage law to come into operation. Such an election will, however, never happen."

NOT NEARLY AS MUCH MONEY AFTER FREE COINAGE AS NOW.

Wage-Earner.—"But say, John, I thought there was to be so much money for everyone that it would not matter even if it was not worth quite as much as our present currency, the additional supply would far more than make up the loss."

Farmer.—"How can there be as much money as now, if one-third of all our currency, that is our gold, leaves us, as it will do, and if we can only replace the \$600,000,000 lost, at the rate of \$40,000,000 to \$50,000,000 a year? And yet these silver men promise us all the money we need as well as enough to make up for the loss of outside capital, which I must say seems to me to come in very handy, never mind where it comes from."

"There is no doubt that Eastern capital has been poured into the West and South to the tune of many hundreds of millions of dollars, and it was a perfect god-send when it came, for money was very scarce and so dear that we considered ourselves lucky if we could get the loan of it at two per cent. a month. To give you an idea of the extent to which that money was invested here I was told on excellent authority that Great Britain invested \$75,000,000 in the Western cattle business alone between 1880 and 1883."

THE COMMON PEOPLE WHO INVEST IN WESTERN SECURITIES.

"Now we get up a great amount of excitement against the boated capitalists of the Eastern States and Europe, but as I understand it, that money was subscribed by tens of thousands of small investors—ordinary people like you and me—who thought well enough of us to send their money out here five thousand miles away from home. And the same in the East. All that money invested in our farm mortgages belongs to people of small savings, either by direct investment or through institutions. It should not be forgotten that the heads of those great Savings Institutions, are but the clerks as it were of the millions of people of small means, whose money they handle."

"Whatever our feelings may be against the monied classes, we have nothing against the common people of either this country or England or

Scotland or Ireland or Germany or Holland, who have always shown kindly feelings towards us, and have, as I said, intrusted us with their savings. But whether the people who have put their money in here are in reality large capitalists or simple working people, we have got to respect the confidence they have placed in us. It would be a low down kind of business to harrass foreign capital here, where it is more or less exposed, and it would be extremely foolish because in spite of all the talk of those blatherskites about our being able to make money enough for ourselves, we simply can't do it, and that outside capital is the very breath of life to this Western country to-day. Eastern money is just as good as any other and a good deal cheaper."

WHY NOT ROB THE BANK?

"A fifty-three cent dollar will be as great a theft as if we broke into the bank and robbed it. Shall we teach our children that honesty is a bad or poor policy? *God forbid.*"

Wage-Earner.—"Do you think, John, that foreign capital has stopped coming in here?"

Farmer.—"I think it has, Sam, to a large extent, because it has been frightened away by the wild talk of these silver men. I think, however, that if we could get the currency question properly settled, confidence would be restored and an enormous stream of money would begin to come this way at once."

CONFIDENCE IS EVERYTHING.

"I think confidence is everything, and nothing but gold seems to give that confidence. It is a staple article, it does not jump up and down like silver, which is worth over a dollar an ounce one year, and worth less than half a dollar an ounce another year. Even the most prominent silver men recognize the enormous advantage in gold payments. Altgeld, of Chicago, makes his tenants sign a lease to pay him gold for his rent, while he is preaching free silver."

Wage-Earner.—"Why, I thought these silver men would have nothing to do with gold or gold bugs."

Farmer.—"What would you say then if I were to tell you, what is an absolute fact, that the law firm of the Democratic nominee for President, Mr. W. J. Bryan, were the paid attorneys of Gould in Nebraska. This is denied I know, but I state positively that he was a partner in the firm at the time it acted for Gould."

Wage-Earner.—"You astonish me. How can he then consistently act as the representative of the workmen and farmers of this country?"

Farmer.—"Well, the thing is not straight, Sam, that is all."

Wage Earner.—"Do you think there is money enough in the country now, John?"

Farmer.—"Yes, I think there is abundance of money. We have nearly \$24.00 per head of population, which is quite a large allowance, as nations go, but, Sam, we could do a *roaring* business on half the money we have if confidence went with it. Believe me, 'the nimble dime is better than the lazy quarter.' It is confidence that gives nimbleness to money. The business transactions of the country are settled by check, and credit instruments, to the extent of ninety-five per cent. When our money is lazy, or to put it in another way, when capital is timid, it not only locks its own little five per cent. up, but it locks up with it at the same time the ninety-five per cent. of credit circulation of which it is the basis. Don't confuse capital with money—that is circulation. We are short of capital.

ALL THE GREAT COUNTRIES BELIEVE IN THE GOLD BASIS.

"All the great countries of the world believe in the gold basis, now why should we be so positive that they are wrong? Our people's attitude reminds me a good deal of the Irish juryman who was asked by the Judge why he held out so obstinately and unreasonably against the decision of the other jurymen. 'Your Honor,' he replied, *I never before met eleven such obstinate men!*'

"I do not think that our prejudice should prevent us from taking a leaf out of England's book. That country has less than half the circulation we have, notwithstanding its enormous trade, and the fact that it is the money centre of the world; but then out of a total of \$808,000,000 circulation, \$380,000,000 is gold, and only \$15,000,000 silver, whereas we have \$625,000,000 of silver in our circulation of \$1,660,000,000. But what is of more importance than the proportion of gold, is the fact that Great Britain stands unalterably for the single gold standard.

"There is no sense in the way we show our hostility to England. If we are out for revenge, the way of all others to get it is to adopt the gold standard absolutely, to win back commercial confidence and fight England for the money centre of the world. Ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer Goschen says there is great profit to England in being that money centre; well, let us take it from her. You can bet that England sees the situation clearly. She has money over here—lots of it—and she wouldn't like to lose it, but she would find sweet consolation in the sight of a powerful and determined rival crippling herself so she can't fight any more, and this is why England looks on so calmly at our violent threats of 'Silver!' Just listen to what is said on this subject by M. Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, the most celebrated of

all the French political economists and a warm friend of this country. He says:

"Placed between Europe and Asia, the United States can aspire to take from England the commercial and financial supremacy heretofore enjoyed by that country. * * * It is beyond dispute that the uninterrupted continuance of the single gold standard in England since the beginning of the century has contributed in a marked degree to assure to that country its financial leadership. * * * It is not known exactly what the dollar will be, or the mark, or even the franc; the whims of legislature may change them in the future as they have changed them in the past. On the other hand, there is a rooted confidence among men engaged in finance the world over, that England will never permit the blunder of putting gold and silver on the same footing as money.

"If the United States are to attain a commercial and still more a financial position equal to that of England, there must be no sort of doubt that it is a gold dollar and that never for any reason or under any pretext must that which is called a dollar be paid in silver. Then all nations will have the same faith in the dollar that they have in the pound sterling, and the *United States will become the chosen land of the capital of the whole world.* The old nations—all those strenuous producers of savings that they no longer know how to employ—will direct their over-flowing capital towards the United States. All that is lacking is a completely solid monetary system to enable the American people to profit by a large part of the capital accumulated in such enormous quantities by the old nations of Europe."

"Now you can see that it would be more bitter to England than plague, pestilence or famine to have this country maintain the gold standard, because by doing so we would beyond all doubt take from her in a short time the enormously profitable position which she has occupied for centuries as the money center of the world.

"What must we think of these silver men who would have us believe that Englishmen bribed our legislators to force through the 1873 bill when the Englishmen's interest lay so manifestly all the other way? I hate to throw mud, but I must say that there is as much consistency in supposing that these free silver men are themselves the paid agents of Englishmen, or worse still, Englishmen in disguise. Certainly no recognized friend of England could have done as much for her as they are doing in promoting free coinage."

GOING BACK TO FEUDALISM.

"Here we are backing into the ways and habits of feudalism when kings clipped and debased their coinage. This kind of thing hurts no one in reality but ourselves. If 'free silver' is intended to fight England with, I must say that it is like the fighting which Orpheus C. Ker's soldier did, when his officer found him running away from the field of battle. 'Where are you going?' roared the officer. 'To cut off the enemy's retreat,' panted the soldier. That is not the kind of warfare we should engage in. We should fight boldly—gold with gold. We can't fight gold with silver any more than the Indians can fight the machine gun with bow and arrow."

PRICES GOING UP, WAGES STANDING STILL.

Wage-Earner.—"I read somewhere that under free coinage we would pay our debts at fifty cents on the dollar. Can you explain how that is?"

Farmer.—"Any holder of silver will be able to have his fifty-two cents' worth of bullion coined into a dollar free of charge. He can then force his fifty-two cent silver dollar onto you and me in payment for farm produce or labor, and we will have to give him one hundred cents' worth of value for it because he will then be within his legal rights in doing so. Now, although I may be able to save myself from some of my losses on *new* business, I cannot get square when old debts are paid with this new money. You will, however, be very badly off because you will find prices rising on all sides of you to meet the inflated value of the dollar, while as usual your wages will rise very slowly, if at all. Indeed, I think my situation is only a little less desperate than your own, because although I can put up my prices somewhat, I shall lose my foreign market altogether, while my home market will be very much narrowed by the ruin to our commerce. In saying that your wages would probably not rise at all I think that is correct, because so many men will be thrown out of business by the injury done to trade that even the best workman will be only too thankful if he keeps his job at the old wages to think of agitating for a rise. Take the case of our railways, for instance. They will be compelled to take the 50 cent silver dollar, but must pay the interest on their bonds in *gold*. They will have to pay more for their supplies, their traffic will be reduced, and, as they dare not increase their freight charges, *they will have to make up the shortage by reducing the wages of their employees.*"

THE WHEAT GROWER BETWEEN THE DEVIL AND THE DEEP SEA.

Wage-Earner.—"Why should you lose your foreign market, John?"

Farmer.—"Well, to tell you the truth, we farmers are between the devil and the deep sea. If free coinage should by any possibility occur here, it means bad—perilously bad times. These, in their turn, mean a small demand for wheat. Then if we do not sell our wheat to foreign countries we cut our market in two, with the result that we shall have a large surplus which will break down our home prices, *sure*. If, however, we *do* sell to England as our largest customer, we must do so at the same price as our rivals from India, Argentina and Russia. That is to say, the fact that free coinage may

have put up the price of wheat here won't enable us to get the increased price abroad, and we must cut down our price to suit the European market."

OUR FOREIGN TRADE.

Farmer.—"Here are some figures which show our trade with foreign countries. Notice how much we do with gold standard countries, and remember that in reality, all bimetallic countries are on a gold basis, their legal tender being exchangeable for gold. If we adopted free coinage it would mean *silver monometallism*.

Our annual business is, with gold countries,	-	\$891,000,000
" " " " " bimetallic countries,	-	481,000,000
" " " " " SILVER countries,		163,000,000

"So you see that there is less than 12 per cent. of the foreign market with which we can do business on satisfactory terms once we adopt free coinage of silver. CAN WE AFFORD TO PLAY THE FOOL WITH A FOREIGN BUSINESS OF SUCH MAGNITUDE, WHICH HAS COST US A HUNDRED YEARS TO BUILD UP?"

"I can imagine no greater folly than the wilful destruction of such a trade. Our children would rise up and curse us if we ever sanctioned it."

INJURIOUS EFFECTS ON PEOPLE OF FIXED INCOMES.

Wage-Earner.—"And if it results in this way for you and me, John, and I don't see how it can be otherwise from what you say, what will become of those people who have fixed incomes or money in the savings banks, or invested money, and what about the pensioners and their little incomes?"

Farmer.—"It means that every bank deposit, every dollar of invested or insurance money, every pension and every fixed income, from the clergyman's stipend to the cook's wage, will be cut in two by being able to purchase just half as much of the necessities of life as formerly."

THE MONEY WHICH THE IRISHMEN AND IRISHWOMEN SEND HOME WILL COST TWICE AS MUCH.

"Free Coinage will bear very hard in individual cases. For instance, the \$5.00 sent to the poor old widow in Ireland depending upon the bounty of her children in this country for all she knows of the comforts of life, will only be worth ten shillings instead of a pound as it is now.

"It seems to me that the parents' curse must follow such legislation."

INSANITY, ANARCHY, OR WHAT?

Wage-Earner.—"We have not been very well off for the last two or three years it is true, but still we have roofs over our heads, we are able to feed and clothe ourselves and our families and educate our children, and as a matter of fact we have a good many of the comforts and even some of the luxuries of life; at all events, we have a great many more of both than our fathers had before us. Now can you tell me why we are going to try so desperate a remedy for a purely temporary dullness in trade, which it seems to me is after all only caused by the want of confidence created by the continued agitation of these same silver men? The barbarous habit of pouring boiling oil into gun-shot wounds in the olden time seems a wise and merciful attempt at a cure in comparison with this free coinage prescription."

Farmer.—"I cannot explain it, Sam. It is either insanity or anarchy. I hear Herr Most is a friend of Altgeld and Tillman, and that bodes ill for decent folks. But I have not yet lost faith in the great American vote, AND IF WE FARMERS AND WAGE-EARNERS ARE SOLID IN OUR VOTE AGAINST FREE COINAGE, WE CAN KILL IT. Only it won't do to rely on our neighbor's vote to do it. Each man must feel as if the issue rested with him alone."

"When this free silver craze dies out this time, it dies for good; and we will move forward rapidly to better times, which will be all the better and all the brighter for what we have gone through, and although we shall benefit by the savings which we have put aside against a still worse time, still we shall enjoy our new prosperity soberly as those who have just escaped a great peril by the providence of God."

THE END.

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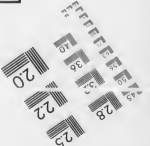
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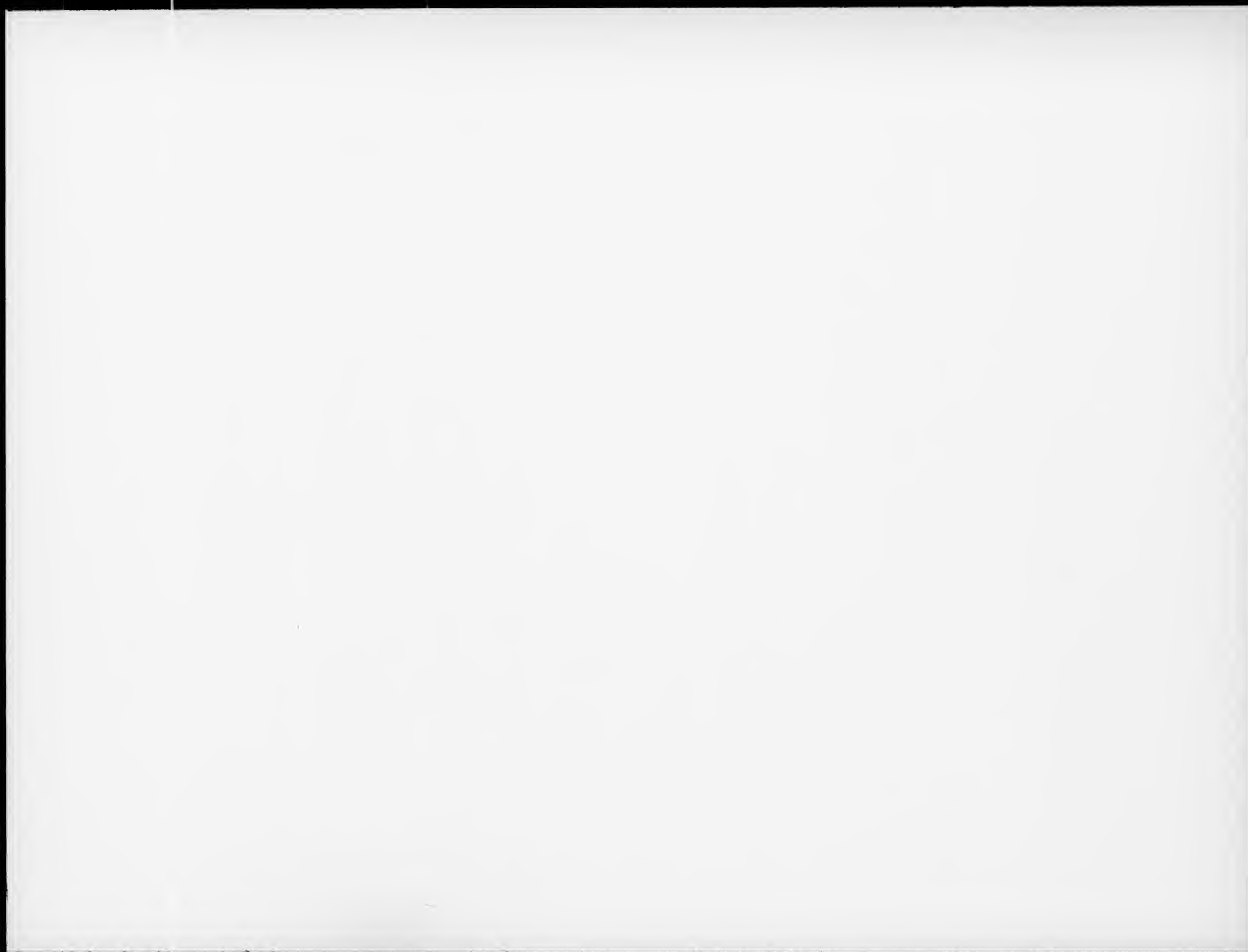
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